

3.5 WETLANDS

Additional and updated information about wetlands is presented below. Most of the new information relates to potential impacts on Wetland C and potential wetland impacts from the Brown Road Materials Storage Area and the Clean Fuels or ISOM project.

3.5.1 Existing Conditions

- Figure 3.5-2 from the Draft EIS has been deleted. On Page 3.5-3 of the Draft EIS, the first sentence of the first paragraph should be deleted and replaced with the following text.

Wetlands associated with the cogeneration facility are primarily PEM systems (Figure 3.5-1).

- On Page 3.5-4 of the Draft EIS, the first sentence of the fifth paragraph should be deleted and replaced with the following text.

Wetlands associated with components of the refinery interface (Laydown Areas 1, 2, and 3, Access Road 2, and pipeline corridor) are primarily PEM systems (Figure 3.5-1).

- A new Figure 3.5-2 has been added to the Final EIS. It is located at the end of this section. On Page 3.5-9 of the Draft EIS, the first sentence of the first paragraph should be deleted and replaced with the following text.

Two mitigation sites have been identified immediately north of the cogeneration facility and refinery interface site (Figure 3.5-2).

- Figure 3.5-3 has been revised. The revised figure, located at the end of this section, should replace the figure in the Draft EIS.

3.5.2 Impacts of the Proposed Action

- In the third paragraph on Page 3.5-12 of the Draft EIS, the following text should be inserted between the seventh and eighth sentences.

As identified in the original ASC, a perimeter ditch was to be constructed along the western border of Wetland C. The Corps of Engineers has indicated, however, that construction of this ditch through Wetland C will not be permitted.

- On Page 3.5-13 of the Draft EIS, the first sentence of the second full paragraph should be replaced with the following text.

This 150-foot-wide, 0.8-mile transmission corridor would require the construction of 4 towers.

3.5.4 Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

- The following text provides additional information on other projects currently being built or to be built in the near future. On Page 3.5-15 of the Draft EIS, the fourth paragraph should be deleted and replaced with the following text.

The proposed Georgia Strait Crossing (GSX) pipeline project is anticipated to be constructed concurrently with the proposed project. Along the more than 33-mile pipeline corridor, approximately 62 acres would be affected by construction, but only 7.4 acres would be permanently affected by vegetation management as part of pipeline maintenance. Within the portion of the pipeline corridor in the Terrell Creek watershed (MPs 28 to 33), about 2 acres would be affected by construction and about 1 acre would be permanently affected by vegetation management. Mitigation for these impacts has been accepted by the Corps.

Currently, the BP Cherry Point Refinery is constructing a Clean Fuels or gasoline isomerization (ISOM) project within the boundary of the refinery. This project would not affect wetlands because the project site is a cleared gravel area. Another BP project to be built in the near future is the Brown Road Materials Storage Area. This project would permanently affect 11 acres of wetlands and temporarily disturb 0.17 acre of wetland in the area south of the proposed cogeneration project. These wetland impacts would be mitigated by rehabilitating approximately 34 acres of wetlands, ponds, and surrounding uplands located within the BP Cherry Point property. The proposed mitigation area for this project is north of Grandview Road and immediately west CMA 2, one of two wetland mitigation sites for the proposed project.

Most of the wetlands identified above to be affected in the Terrell Creek watershed are highly disturbed and dominated by non-native, invasive plant species. The mitigation areas would be constructed with native species. While cumulatively there would be a net loss in wetland area, it is anticipated there would be a net gain in wetland function.

At this time, Whatcom County envisions growth and development in the general area. Potential impacts on wetland systems associated with these projects would depend on the quantity and quality of affected wetland systems and approved mitigation. The proposed project would not contribute to potential cumulative impacts on wetland communities because proposed mitigation measures would create and enhance wetlands with high functional values to replace disturbed wetlands with low functional values.

3.5.5 Mitigation Measures

- The last paragraph on Page 3.5-15 and the first paragraph on Page 3.5-16 of the Draft EIS should be deleted and replaced with the following text.

Mitigation measures consistent with those generally required by the Corps and Ecology for Category III wetlands within western Washington would be carried out during construction and operation of the project to protect wetlands that would not be filled. Wetlands adjacent to the project site, such as Wetland I, would be protected using silt fencing and hay bales. The potential drainage impact on Wetland C from the construction of a perimeter ditch along the west side of the wetland would be avoided by not digging a ditch, as required by the Corps.

The portions of Wetlands A, B, C, and D that would not be disturbed would also be protected using silt fencing and hay bales. Approximately 4.66 acres of Wetland F and 0.2 acre of Wetland B3 would be temporarily disturbed and restored after project construction is completed. Under the proposed mitigation plan, in addition to the 0.2 acre of wetland restoration of Wetland B3, 0.3 acre of wetland creation would occur, for a total of 0.5 acre of wetland restoration and creation in this area of the project site (Appendix C).

- Since the Draft EIS was published, the Applicant completed the Final Cogeneration Project Compensatory Mitigation Plan. Also, the Applicant and Whatcom County approved a Settlement Agreement, which among other things identifies specific measures to make the mitigation sites CMA 1 and CMA 2 more “heron-friendly.” On Page 3.5-16 of the Draft EIS, the last sentence of the third paragraph should be deleted and replaced with the following text.

Detailed information associated with proposed mitigation measures is provided in the Final Cogeneration Project Compensatory Mitigation Plan and all of its attachments (see Appendix C of this Final EIS).

Figure 3.5-2

Figure 3.5-3